



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, PUBLIC HEALTH COMMAND DISTRICT-JAPAN
APO AREA PACIFIC 96343-5005

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

MCHB-RP-J

24 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Pet Requirements for Entrance into Japan For Pets from Countries that are NOT Rabies Free

1. Responsibilities: Owners are responsible for the shipment of pets arriving, departing, and within Japan. Owners are responsible for all matters associated with travel arrangements, shipping requirements, and costs for their pets.
2. Japanese Animal Quarantine Service Regulations require that all animals entering Japan be examined to determine if they are free from communicable diseases. Animals found to be free from communicable diseases and meeting entrance requirements may be released to the owner's custody, subject to the restrictions discussed below.
3. As of 6 June 2005, Japan began enforcing a new quarantine program for import and export of animals and pets. Active duty military members, members of the civilian component and their respective dependents enter Japan under the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The SOFA sets forth rights and responsibilities applicable to US Forces individuals who enter Japan. The US Forces, Japan (USFJ) thus negotiated with the Government of Japan (GOJ) to resolve how this new pet quarantine program would affect SOFA status personnel. This memorandum provides guidelines and recommendations for SOFA status personnel assigned to Japan who will be transporting personal pets into Japan.
4. There will be some differences between how the new Japanese pet quarantine program will be applied to SOFA status members and how it will apply to others. Due to these differences, the information on the new pet quarantine program published by the Government of Japan, the US State Department, the USDA, and the USFJ may differ. To minimize any inconvenience which might otherwise be experienced, we recommend following the guidelines listed below. Do not hesitate to contact the installation veterinarians in Japan if necessary. All contact information may be found on the Public Health Command District – Japan website:
<http://www.usarj.army.mil/organization/vet/contacts.aspx>
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) quarantine inspectors and Public Health Command veterinarians will determine the length of each pet's quarantine period when the pet arrives in Japan. The quarantine periods will range up to 180 days.
6. The USFJ Veterinarian offers the following recommendations to assist SOFA status personnel in the movement of their pets to Japan. Each item listed below is important and must be accomplished as soon as the military member is aware of movement to Japan. This will ease the transition and acceptance of the pets into Japan.

GERALD R SARGENT
MAJ, VC
Commanding

Dog and Cat Processing Summary

1. Microchip

- a. ALL animals that enter Japan MUST have a microchip
- b. Japan requires International Standards Organization (ISO) [15 numbers] or ISO compatible microchips [10 numbers and no letters or other characters]
- c. If the implanted microchip is not ISO or ISO compatible, the Government of Japan Animal Quarantine Service (GOJ AQS) states that the importer is required to provide an accurate reader to confirm the microchip number
- d. The microchip must be implanted prior to the first rabies vaccine to validate all vaccines and blood tests done for importation¹
- e. Be sure to have the number accurately written down on *all* documentation

2. Rabies Vaccinations²

- a. These MUST be inactivated or killed virus vaccines to be accepted
- b. The two most recent vaccinations must have been given at least 30 days apart
- c. The second of the two most recent vaccinations must have been given before the first vaccination expired (i.e. within the one year or three year window)
- d. The arrival date in Japan must be before the most recent vaccination expires
- e. Both of these must be done after the microchip unless they fall under the April 2010 exception instituted by the GOJ AQS¹
- f. The pet must be at least 91 days old for the first vaccination
- g. Rabies vaccines given at a military Veterinary Treatment Facility (VTF) that are documented on DD form 2208 are considered valid
- h. Rabies vaccines given at a civilian veterinary clinic and/or documented on a rabies certificate other than DD form 2208, MUST be endorsed by the USDA

3. FAVN (Fluorescent Antibody Viral Neutralization) Test¹

- a. This MUST be done after the microchip and *both* of the rabies vaccinations
- b. The FAVN may be drawn the same day as the second rabies vaccine, according to GOJ AQS regulations. To allow for best results, however, both approved laboratories recommend waiting a minimum of 21 days after the second rabies vaccination before drawing the FAVN.
- c. The sample must be taken before the most recent vaccination expires (i.e. within the one year or three year window)
- d. To avoid quarantine, the arrival date in Japan must be between 180 days and two years after the sampling date
- e. A passing level of ≥ 0.5 IU/mL must be documented
- f. The following are the two approved laboratories:
 - i. DoD Veterinary Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory

¹ A pet that is rabies vaccinated prior to microchip implantation *may* be able to have it validated via a FAVN test. Please see the April 2010 Exception schematics for further details.

² If the pet has lived in Taiwan, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii, or Guam for at least 180 days prior to flying directly to Japan, then rabies vaccinations and a FAVN are not required.

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PHCR-South
ATTN: Diagnostic Lab
2899 Schofield Road, Suite 2630
Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-7583
Phone: (210) 295-4605/4010/4387
DSN: 421-4605
Fax: (210) 270-2559
E-mail: rabies@ln.amedd.army.mil or rabies.favn@amedd.army.mil
Website: www.vetlab.army.mil

- ii. Kansas State University Rabies Laboratory
2005 Research Park Circle
Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone: (785) 532-4483
Fax: (785) 532-4474/4522
Website: <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/depts/dmp/service/rabies/index.htm>

4. **Advance Notification**

- a. The GOJ AQS requires a notification form be sent to the pet's port of entry 40 days prior to travel. In most cases, this is Narita Airport. If you do not have your flight information, the GOJ AQS recommends sending the notification with as much information as possible with an estimated date of entry.
- b. The form can be found on the GOJ AQS website at
<http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/import-other.html>
 - i. Dog: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/notification-dog.pdf>
 - ii. Cat: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/notification-cat.pdf>
- c. Use the following to help you to fill out the forms:
 - i. Example: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/notifi-dogcat-en.pdf>
 - ii. Ports of Entry contact information:
<http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/contactus.html>
 - iii. In the "Remarks" section of this form, state "This pet belongs to a US SOFA sponsored family and will be assigned to (list duty site)."
- d. Once your travel plans are finalized, you may contact your port of entry with the updated information.
 - i. Website: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/contactus.html>
 - ii. Modification Form:
<http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/modnotification.pdf>

5. **Health Certificate**

- a. GOJ AQS recommends that this be obtained within two days of travel, but no more than ten days prior to travel
- b. Military Veterinarians may use the MDJ OP 2209
- c. Civilian Veterinarians must be accredited with the USDA and are required to use the USDA certification form.

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- i. The local state USDA office must endorse the health certificate with a raised seal. For a list of state offices go to http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/area_offices/
- ii. Although the USDA form is valid for 30 days, the GOJ AQS will only recognize it if it was issued within 10 days of travel.
- iii. Rabies certificates should be sent to the local state USDA office along with the health certificate for endorsement.

6. **Additional Forms and Documents**

- a. The GOJ AQS recommends that an additional Export Declaration form be filled out by the pet's veterinarian. It can be found at <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/CertificateA041126.pdf>
- b. Have additional copies of the Permanent Change of Station Orders to verify SOFA status.
- c. If the pet must travel on a separate flight via freight, then the airline carrier will likely issue an "air waybill" or air consignment note. It is recommended that you maintain additional copies.
- d. If the pet is traveling with someone other than the SOFA status service member or dependents, then a power of attorney authorizing that individual is required

7. **Quarantine in Japan**

- a. The GOJ AQS requires that any pet that enters Japan without having completed the 180 day waiting period will need to complete that period at a GOJ quarantine facility or an approved kennel. Some of the kennels located on the US military bases have been approved by the GOJ AQS for this purpose. The service member must contact the kennel prior to arrival to determine if it is approved and to make arrangements for boarding.
- b. The GOJ AQS has allowed an exception for those SOFA status personnel that live on US military bases. In this exception, a pet may complete the quarantine "at home" as long as that pet does not interact with animals other than those in the same household and does not leave the military base until cleared from quarantine at the local VTF³. Whether a service member is placed in housing that allows pets is at the discretion of the gaining installation.
- c. Any fees incurred for pet travel and quarantine are the sole responsibility of the service member.

8. **Arrival in Japan**

- a. All pets **MUST** check into the local VTF within 72 business hours of arrival, regardless of port of entry (commercial or civilian). This is when the pet will be registered at the VTF and the quarantine status recorded.
- b. Pets on quarantine **MUST** return to the local VTF for quarantine checks:
 - i. one month after arrival, *and*

³ If the local military Veterinary Treatment Facility is on a separate installation, then the pet may travel from one installation to the installation where the VTF is located.

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- ii. on the final quarantine date *or* six months after arrival, whichever comes first.
- c. Failure to comply with quarantine check procedures may result in:
 - i. suspension of privileges at the local VTF, *and*
 - ii. fines imposed by the GOJ.

9. **Traveling from Rabies Free Countries**

- a. Taiwan, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii, or Guam **ONLY**
- b. The pet must have lived in one of these locations:
 - i. since birth, *or*
 - ii. for at least 180 days prior to flying directly to Japan, *or*
 - iii. has been kept in the location since being directly imported from Japan.
- c. If these requirements are satisfied, then the pet only requires a microchip, official health certificate and advance notification.

10. **Exporting**

- a. The GOJ AQS requires that pets leaving Japan be inspected at the local GOJ AQS office in addition to any veterinary visits. The forms can be found at:
 - i. Overview: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/export.html>
 - ii. Dog: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/applicationex-dog.pdf>
 - iii. Cat: <http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/pdf/applicationex-cat.pdf>
- b. If the pet is to return to Japan at a later date, then all of the above requirements still apply and must be kept up to date. Otherwise, the pet will be subject to quarantine.

11. **Airlines**

- a. Each airline has its own requirements for travel and pet transportation, so it is important to contact your airline carrier for any additional information.